

Instructions to Health Care Providers using the Heart Health Program Client Education Sheets



The client education cards are intended for use by health care professionals when counseling clients about their risk factors for heart disease.

This set contains 8 topic sheets to motivate clients to make healthy changes:

Risk Factors	Cholesterol
Smoking	High Blood Pressure
Physical Activity	Tips to Lose Weight
Less Stress	To Parents with High Cholesterol.

Clients are more likely to make recommended lifestyle changes when information is presented in small amounts. Avoid giving the client more than 5 sheets at one session. To avoid deluging your clients with too much information, we suggest:

Give **all** the clients a copy of the **Risk Factor** sheet.

If the client has high cholesterol, give them the **Cholesterol** sheet.

If the client smokes, give them the **Smoking** sheet.

If the client has high blood pressure, give them the **High Blood Pressure** sheet.

If the client is inactive give them the **Lead An Active Life** sheet.

Ask the client to identify **one** behavior change they wish to make. If the client chooses to change their Activity Level, Cholesterol, Smoking, or High Blood Pressure, they have the information they need. If they choose to make a change in the area of Weight or Stress, give them one of these sheets.

Ask the client to identify small changes they will be able to maintain for their lifetime. Because:

- They are more likely to follow through with these suggestions
- There is more success when they make the changes in small, manageable increments
- If we give them too much advice, they may tune us out — we risk losing their interest entirely
- There is no temporary solution.
- If they succeed this time, they'll be willing to try other changes later

If they have elevated cholesterol and also have children at home, suggest the **To Parents with High Cholesterol** sheet.

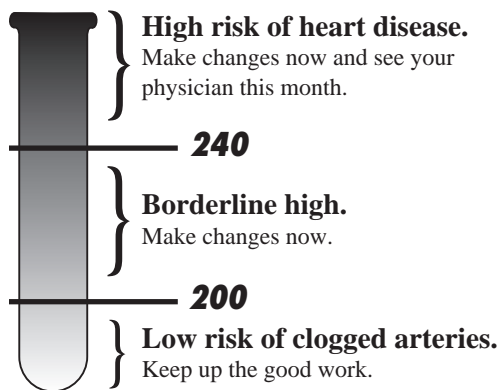
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Cholesterol



High cholesterol levels in your blood can clog your arteries. Clogged arteries cause heart attacks and strokes!

Do you know your cholesterol level?



How to reduce your blood cholesterol level:

- Be physically active
- Control your weight
- Stop smoking
- Eat less fat and cholesterol

Eating less fat and cholesterol

Look for foods that have little or no fat and foods with low cholesterol.

Avoid eating a lot of saturated fat:

- butter
- animal fat (bacon, lard, beef fat, suet)
- tropical oils (palm, coconut)

Instead, use small amounts of:

- safflower oil
- canola oil
- sunflower seed oil
- olive oil
- corn oil

Eat more fruits, vegetables and whole grains, instead of foods with a lot of fat.

Change your recipes

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Use margarine | instead of butter |
| Use vegetable oil | instead of shortening |
| Use non-fat milk | instead of whole milk |
| Use non-fat yogurt | instead of sour cream |
| Use 2 egg whites | instead of 1 whole egg |

When eating out

- Hold the mayonnaise and butter
- Order it broiled or steamed, not fried
- Ask for sauce and salad dressing on the side.
Use just a little.

High Blood Pressure



Blood pressure is the pressure that pushes blood through the arteries. If blood can't flow easily, the pressure increases. When the pressure is too great, you have high blood pressure (also called hypertension). If not controlled or improved, it can cause heart problems, a stroke or kidney damage.

Know your blood pressure.

Have your blood pressure checked at least once a year. To check your blood pressure, a health care provider puts a cuff around your arm and measures the pressure caused by blood moving through your arteries.

Normal blood pressure is less than 130/85.

If either of the numbers in your blood pressure are 130/85 or more, have it checked again. If it is still high, see your doctor. You may need to learn ways to control it.

Ways to improve your blood pressure

Put a ✓ by what you are doing now.

Put an X by a new idea you will try.

- ☐ If you smoke, try to stop.
- ☐ Lose weight, if you are overweight.
- ☐ Be physically active
 - A total of 30 minutes each day
 - At a medium level such as walking or gardening
 - Five or more days a week
- ☐ Limit your sodium intake:
 - Use herbs or spices in place of salt
 - Read labels and choose salt free and low-sodium foods
 - Cook without adding salt
 - Eat sliced chicken, turkey and lean beef instead of hot dogs or lunch meat.
- ☐ Eat more fresh fruits and vegetables.
- ☐ If you drink alcohol, have no more than two drinks a day.
- ☐ Take time to relax part of each day (listen to quiet music, sit and look at nature, be still, soak in the tub).
- ☐ If you're on high blood pressure pills, take them as directed.

Lead An Active Life



Physical activity can make you feel better. It can also be fun. Try different activities to find the ones you enjoy most.

Put more physical activity into your life

Physical activity can:

- make your heart stronger
- lower your blood pressure
- reduce your stress
- improve your cholesterol level

Physical activity helps you:

- have more energy
- lose weight
- sleep better
- feel better

How much?

At least 30 minutes a day.

How often?

Five or more days a week.

How hard?

Until breathing and heartbeat are faster than usual but you can still talk easily.

If you feel tired or short of breath, slow down!

Start a new habit:

- Take time for yourself
- Get moving
- See how much better you feel

How to start walking for the health of it

Wear comfortable shoes.

Start with just 15 minutes a day:

- First 5 minutes, walk slowly to warm up.
- Middle 5 minutes, walk at a brisk pace.
- Last 5 minutes, walk slowly to cool down.

Walk at least three times a week.

Don't miss more than two days in a row.

Weekly, add one minute to the middle, brisk part of your walk.

Get a friend to join you, and have fun!

Make exercise a regular part of your life.

Other ways to get moving:

- Bicycle
- Dance
- Swim
- Run
- Garden
- Push a stroller or lawn mower

Most people do not need to see a doctor before they start to exercise since a gradual, sensible exercise program will have minimal health risks. However, there are some people who should seek medical advice. If you have a health problem, ask your health care provider for advice on exercise.

Tips for Weight Control



If you are overweight, losing a few pounds can help you:

- lower your cholesterol
- lower your blood pressure
- improve your heart health
- have more energy
- feel better

Making Changes

If you plan to lose weight, try not to lose more than 1-2 pounds each week. To get to a healthy weight, make lifelong changes to your activity and eating habits.

Put a ✓ by what you are doing now.

Put an X by a new idea you will try.

Lead an active life:

- ☐ Choose to walk rather than ride (park your car as soon as you enter the parking lot and walk to the door).
- ☐ Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator.
- ☐ Choose human powered tools over electric or gas powered tools (use a broom rather than a vacuum).
- ☐ Make play time active (dance instead of going to a movie).
- ☐ For weight loss, do some form of aerobic exercise 5 times a week, for 30-60 minutes a time, within your target heart rate zone (bike, run, or take an aerobic dance class).

Eat healthy foods:

- ☐ Eat fruits and vegetables at every meal, five or more servings each day.
- ☐ Eat steamed or baked instead of fried foods.
- ☐ Drink a lot of water.
- ☐ Eat low-fat/calorie versions of high-fat foods (non-fat yogurt instead of ice cream).
- ☐ Drink less alcohol.
- ☐ Use less or no margarine and butter on your foods.

Eat more:

- ☐ fresh fruit
- ☐ vegetables and beans
- ☐ fish (baked, steamed, broiled)
- ☐ non- or low-fat milk and cheese
- ☐ whole wheat bread, rice, oatmeal, or corn tortillas
- ☐ high-fiber foods like whole grain pasta, beans and potatoes with skins.

Reduce the amount of fat you eat:

- ☐ Remove the fat and skin from meat before eating.
- ☐ Eat fewer desserts and candies.
- ☐ Order hamburgers and sandwiches without cheese and mayonnaise.

Other ways to be healthier:

- ☐ Stop or reduce tobacco use.
- ☐ Get 7 to 9 hours of sleep every day.
- ☐ Take time to relax part of each day (listen to quiet music, sit and look at nature, be still, soak in the tub).

Smoking



Quitting smoking is the smartest change you can make for your health and your heart. It might be the hardest too, but millions have quit already and you can be next.

Steps to Quit Smoking

✓ off each one as you do it:

- ☐ Set a quit date – about a week from now.
- ☐ Notice when you smoke, why you smoke, how often you smoke, where you smoke.
- ☐ Talk to friends who have quit. Ask them how they did it. Most people quit several times, but the next time could be the last time. Become a happy former smoker.
- ☐ Make some plans for the money you'll save as a non-smoker. Quitting a pack a day habit can give you over \$900 extra next year!
- ☐ Have some low-calorie snacks to munch on when the urge hits—unsalted sunflower seeds in the shell, sugarless mints, carrot sticks, gum, or plain popcorn. Keep toothpicks or cinnamon sticks with you to chew on.
- ☐ On your chosen quit date, clean up your life. Throw out the ash trays and cigarettes. Vacuum the car. Wash your clothes. Air out the house. Enjoy the fresh smell.

After You Quit . . .

- Start a hobby that keeps your hands busy—gardening, knitting, whittling, jigsaw puzzles, quilting, video games.
- Brush your teeth when you get the urge to smoke.
- Spend more time in places that don't allow smoking (shower, church, movies).
- Drink a lot of water and fruit or vegetable juice.
- Take a walk instead of lighting up. Bicycle, swim, play ball, dance.
- Munch on low-cal snacks. Chew on a toothpick or cinnamon stick.
- Several times a day, go outside and breathe deeply. Inhale the fresh air. Let it out slowly. Relax.
- Notice how much better food tastes. Enjoy it more, but don't eat more.
- Spend some time on your new hobby every day.
- Give yourself a gift.

Risk Factors



*Cardiovascular disease is a problem with the heart or blood vessels.
Risk factors are conditions or actions which increase the chance of
developing cardiovascular disease.*

Risk Factors for Heart Disease

Risk factors that you can control:

- cigarette smoking
- high blood pressure
- high blood cholesterol
- overweight
- lack of physical activity
- diabetes
- stress

Risk factors that you can't control:

- men: age 45 or older
- women: age 55 or older
- family history of early heart disease

The more risk factors you have the higher your risk of heart disease. It is important to make changes whenever you can.

The most important things you can do to lower your risk of heart disease:

- quit smoking
- be more physically active
- reduce your blood pressure if it's high
- lower your blood cholesterol level

How to reduce your risk of heart disease

Make changes gradually and reward yourself as you make improvements.

If you smoke, set a date to quit.

Quitting may be the most important thing you do. Get some information on how to quit. Think about the extra money you'll have. Quit on your chosen quit date.

Lead a physically active life. It will:

- make it easier to quit smoking
- lower your blood pressure
- reduce your stress
- improve your cholesterol level
- make it easier to lose weight

To lower your blood cholesterol and blood pressure:

- Eat low-fat versions of your favorite foods.
- Try fresh vegetables and fruit for snacks.
- Don't smoke.
- Lead a physically active life.
- Eat a low sodium diet.

If you are overweight, lose weight.

Burn some extra calories by being more active. Cut down on calories from fat.

Learn to relax and lower your stress level. Take some time each day for calm and quiet. Do what matters and let go of the rest.

Less Stress



*Too much stress can raise your blood pressure.
You can learn to handle stress better. Try these ideas one at a time.
Use your favorites often.*

Put a ✓ by what you are doing now.
Put an X by a new idea you will try.

☐ **Exercise** helps you let go and calm down.
Take a walk.

☐ **Sleep.** Being rested can give you a new outlook.

☐ **Take time out.** Find a quiet place. Breathe slowly and deeply for 3 minutes. Enjoy the outdoors.

☐ **Laugh.** Look at the funny side. Tell a joke. Be silly.

☐ **Say NO** if you have too much to do. Do only what matters the very most to you. Save the rest for later.

☐ **Use less caffeine and tobacco.** Instead, drink water, fruit or vegetable juice. Eat fruit or vegetable sticks.

☐ **Play.** Spend some time doing something you loved when you were a kid. Take up a hobby or an active sport.

☐ **Be positive** about yourself and forgive yourself for your mistakes.

☐ **Talk to others** about your feelings. Find a friend or counselor who accepts you just the way you are. Ask them to listen and encourage you.

☐ **Do something you really enjoy** every day. Make a list of healthy things to do that make you feel good. Give yourself a gift.

☐ **Daydream.** Picture yourself relaxing in a favorite quiet place. Take a 5 minute vacation.

☐ **Get a pet or share a neighbor's.** Hugs and kisses from people and pets can warm the heart and help you feel relaxed and peaceful.

☐ **Try something new.**

To Parents with High Cholesterol



Children have a higher risk of developing heart disease if their parents have high cholesterol levels.

Your 2 to 18 year-old child should have a cholesterol check:

- if your cholesterol is over 240.
- if you have parents or grandparents who had heart disease, stroke or circulation problems before age 55.
- if the health history of your child's parents or grandparents is not available.
- if your child smokes, is obese, has diabetes or is physically inactive.

Blood cholesterol levels for children age 2 to 18:

less than 170	=	acceptable
170 - 200	=	borderline
over 200	=	high

Do not put children under age 2 on a low-fat diet — they need fat for normal growth. Ask your health care provider about what to feed infants.

Tips to help your kids avoid heart disease

The best prevention is to change eating habits, activity levels and smoking habits while still young.

Set a good example yourself.

Encourage your kids to:

- Not smoke.
- Eat a wide variety of foods, especially fruits and vegetables.
- Eat low-fat and non-fat foods

<i>such as:</i>	<i>instead of:</i>
plain popcorn	fries
non-fat milk	whole milk
non-fat yogurt	ice cream
fruit juice	milkshakes
- Stay at ideal weight.
- Be physically active, play outdoors or be in sports, instead of watching TV or talking on the phone.
- Walk or ride a bike instead of driving or riding the bus.



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